

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 05160 01 OF 02 061031Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 SAA-01 SES-02 SSM-03
ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /092 W
-----121732 061036Z /10

O P 061003Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9544
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 5160

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION, SEPT. 6, 1978, 1100 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 5132 (DTG 050930Z SEP 78)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN AND SYRIAN SOLDIERS
AGAIN CLASHED IN THE AYN AR-RUMMANEH AND AL HADATH AREAS.
THERE WERE THREATS THAT FIGHTING WOULD BREAK OUT IN YET
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ANOTHER AREA, THE CHRISTIAN TOWN OF KFAR SHIMA. PRESIDENT
SARKIS RETURNED TO BEIRUT FROM THE VATICAN. LEBANON'S
AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, GHASSEN TUEINI, DELIVERED
A LETTER CALLING ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO CONSIDER THE
POSSIBILITY OF REDEFINING THE DUTIES OF UNIFIL. THE
LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AND A PARLIAMENTARY SUBCOMMITTEE
REPORTEDLY REACHED AGREEMENT ON MEMBERSHIP OF THE

MILITARY CONCIL AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE NEW ARMY BILL.
END SUMMARY.

2. MORE FIGHTING IN AYN AR-RUMMANEH AREA.

AT AROUND 2400 HOURS ON SEPTEMBER 5, HEAVY FIGHTING
BROKE OUT AGAIN IN THE AYN AR-RUMMANEH AREA BETWEEN
CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN AND SYRIANS. SEVERAL SHELLS
IMPACTED IN CORNICHE MAZRAA AREA OF WEST BEIRUT, WHERE
THE MURABITUN AND SEVERAL PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS HAVE
OFFICES, BUT THERE WERE NO REPORTED CASUALTIES. THE
FIGHTING DIED DOWN AROUND 0530 HOURS ON SEPTEMBER 6,
BUT SOME SMALL ARMS FIRE IS CONTINUING AS OF 1100 HOURS.

3. MORE FIGHTING IN HADATH AREA.

A. BEGINNING AT 1300 HOURS ON SEPTEMBER 5 CHRISTIAN
MILITIAMEN AND SYRIAN SOLDIERS CLASHED FOR THE SECOND
SUCCESSIVE DAY IN THE AL HADATH-BAABDA AREA. FIVE SHELLS
IMPACTED NEAR BAABDA PALACE AT 1330 HOURS ON
SEPTEMBER 5, ABOUT ONE HOUR BEFORE PRESIDENT SARKIS
RETURNED FROM THE VATICAN (SEE BELOW). ONE CIVILIAN WAS
KILLED AND TWO GENDARMES WOUNDED AT THE PALACE, ACCORDING
TO PRESS REPORTS. (NLP MEMBER NABIL NOUJAYM TOLD US
SEPTEMBER 5 THAT PHALANGE MILITIAMEN HAD SET UP MORTAR
POSITIONS AROUND THE PALACE AND WERE FIRING ON THE SYRIANS,
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WHO WERE FIRING BACK.)

B. THE FIGHTING DIED DOWN AROUND 1730 HOURS ON
SEPTEMBER 5, ALTHOUGH SPORADIC SMALL ARMS FIRE IS
CONTINUING AS OF 1100 HOURS, SEPTEMBER 6.

4. OTHER SECURITY MATTERS.

A. FIGHTING MAY BREAK OUT IN YET A NEW AREA, THE
CHRISTIAN TOWN OF KFAR SHIMA, ABOUT HALFWAY BETWEEN
BEIRUT AND ALEY. RIGHTIST LE REVEIL REPORTED THAT SYRIAN
FORCES HAD THREATENED ON SEPTEMBER 5 TO SHELL KFAR SHIMA
BECAUSE MILITIAMEN THERE HAD
"ALLEGEDLY" FIRED ON A SYRIAN SOLDIER. LE REVEIL ALSO
NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SEVERAL KIDNAPPINGS IN THE
AREA. (AN AMERICAN CITIZEN DISAPPEARED SOMEWHERE BETWEEN
KFAR SHIMA AND ALEY ON AUGUST 29. SEE BEIRUT 5027).

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ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /092 W

-----121781 061040Z /10

O P 061003Z SEP 78

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9545

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

COMSIXTHFLT

CTF SIX ZERO

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USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 5160

B. ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, THE FIGHTING BETWEEN GUNMEN OF THE NATIONAL LIBERAL AND PHALANGE PARTIES IN THE EAST BEIRUT SUBURB OF JDEIDE ON SEPTEMBER 5 OCCURRED WHEN A GROUP OF PHALANGISTS TRIED TO TAKE OVER OFFICES IN A BUILDING IN THE NEW COMMERCIAL CENTER OF ZALKA (NEAR JDEIDE). THE PHALANGISTS WISHED TO USE THE OFFICES FOR THEIR RADIO STATION, THE VOICE OF LEBANON, BUT WERE OPPOSED BY MILITIAMEN OF THE NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY, THE PAPER SAID.

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C. MEANWHILE, LE REVEIL REPORTED ON SEPTEMBER 6 THAT SIX SYRIAN SOLDIERS DIED AS THE RESULT OF THE EXPLOSION WHICH DESTROYED THEIR BUS ON SEPTEMBER 4 IN MDEIREJ

(SEE SEPTEMBER 5 SITREP). IKE SAID THAT "RELIABLE SOURCES" HAD DETERMINED THAT THE EXPLOSION WAS NOT ACCIDENTAL, BUT WAS CAUSED BY A CHARGE PLANTED IN A VOLKSWAGON (NOT A FIAT) NEXT TO THE MAIN ROAD.

D. SUMMING IT ALL UP, FOREIGN MINISTER FUAD BOUTROS TOLD REPORTERS SEPTEMBER 5 THE SECURITY SITUATION IN LEBANON AS A WHOLE WAS "GOOD".

5. PRESIDENT RETURNS.

PRESIDENT ELIAS SARKIS RETURNED TO BEIRUT SEPTEMBER 5 AFTER REPRESENTING LEBANON AT THE CORONATION OF POPE JOHN PAUL I AT THE VATICAN. SARKIS HAD LEFT FOR THE VATICAN ON SEPTEMBER 3. HE MADE NO STATEMENTS ON HIS RETURN TO BEIRUT.

6. LETTER TO THE U.N.

ACCORDING TO THE BEIRUT PRESS, LEBANON'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, GHASSEN TUEINI, DELIVERED A LETTER TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT ON SEPTEMBER 4 WHICH ASKED THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF "REDEFINING" THE DUTIES OF UNIFIL TO INSURE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF UNSC RESOLUTIONS 425 AND 426. THE LETTER DID NOT EXPLAIN HOW THE DUTIES SHOULD BE RE-DEFINED. THE LETTER ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THE GOL RESERVED THE RIGHT TO CALL A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING WHENEVER IT DEEMED IT NECESSARY OR USEFUL.
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7. WORK ON NEW ARMY BILL.

THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AND A PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT ON THE MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY COUNCIL, THE MAJOR STRUCTURAL INNOVATION PROVIDED FOR IN THE CONTROVERSIAL NEW ARMY BILL, ACCORDING TO IKE. THE AGREEMENT WAS ANNOUNCED BY DEFENSE MINISTER FUAD BOUTROS ON SEPTEMBER 5. THE MEMBERS WOULD INCLUDE:

(1) THE COMMANDER OF THE ARMY, VICTOR KHOURY,
A MARONITE, AS CHAIRMAN;

(2) THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE MILITARY COUNCIL
(NOT YET NAMED);

(3) THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF
DEFENSE, DR. HASSAN AL HASSAN, A SHIA; AND,

(4) TWO SENIOR OFFICERS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SITREP
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BEIRUT05160
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BEIRUT 5132
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1524154
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANESE SITUATION, SEPT. 6, 1978, 1100 HOURS LOCAL
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/50116956-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014